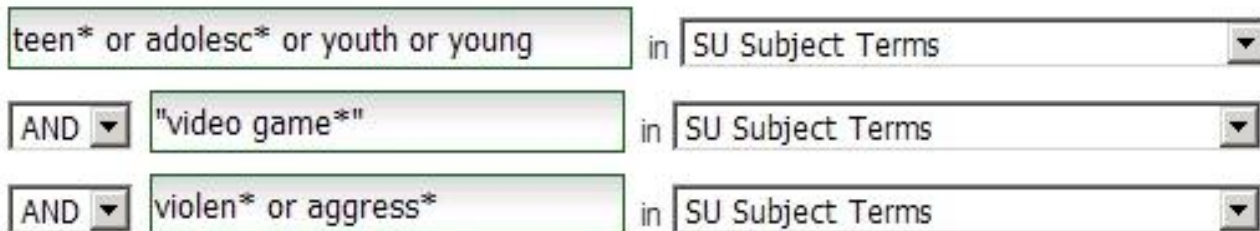# DATABASE SEARCH STRATEGIES:

- Combine your synonyms with OR, all on one search box line

- Combine your separate concepts with AND, one concept per search box line

- ***** stands for **any number of characters**, and is useful when you want to find all words that share the same root, i.e. **teen*** finds *teenage, teenager, teenagers,* etc.

- Quotation marks ("") help you search for exact phrases of two words or more.

- You can use specific **search fields** (drop-down menu to the right of each search box) to narrow your search or make it more precise in various ways. Example: **Author**, **Title**, **Publication/Source Name**, **Subject**.
    o Using the **SUBJECT** field tells the database that your search words must be 'tags' which have been specifically assigned to an article by the author or by a subject indexer.

For example, to search for articles about the topic of **teenage violence and video games** try this:

teen* or adolesc* or youth or young	in	SU Subject Terms ▼
AND ▼ "video game*"	in	SU Subject Terms ▼
AND ▼ violen* or aggress*	in	SU Subject Terms ▼

×× *NOTE that here **SU Subject Terms** are selected on every line. This may NOT be advisable in all circumstances. You can often start you search by leaving the drop-box on the right at its default, and then later try narrowing.*

Limiting TIPS:
At the main search page or the search results page, take the time to **explore the different ways in which you can limit your list of hits**. For EXAMPLE:
- There is usually checkbox that can limit your search to **peer-reviewed** or **scholarly** articles. *You cannot always blindly trust this limit. Use with caution and judgment.*
- **DON'T** use the **Full Text** checkbox, as this will eliminate many useful items from your search.
- **Date limits and sorting options** are always available, and sometimes preferable to relevance ranking.

Choosing multiple databases:

At the main search page you can often select a "**Choose Databases"** link – this allows you to select and search multiple databases (on the same platform) at the same time.